

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)**

### **FY 2017 Youth Ambassadors Program**

#### **Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAPEC-17-032**

#### **Citizen Exchanges Youth Programs Division**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Youth Programs Division of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA/PE/C/PY) for the FY 2017 Youth Ambassadors Program. Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

#### **I. STATEMENT OF WORK**

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of the U.S. embassies in South America, Central America, the Caribbean, Haiti and Canada are supporting the participation of high school youth and adult educators in intensive, substantive three-week exchanges in the United States and select partner countries. The specific regions are South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela), Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama), the Caribbean (the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago), Haiti and Canada.

The exchange activities will introduce the participants to a comprehensive survey of civic education, community service, and youth leadership development, as well as subthemes such as entrepreneurship, innovation, social inclusion, and environmental protection. Activities will focus on building their knowledge and skill levels in these areas. The students and educators will participate in workshops, community service activities, meetings with community leaders, and discussion groups and will have opportunities for substantive interaction with each other and the peers of the host country.

The total number of participants in the Youth Ambassadors program will be approximately 422 total (100 U.S. and 322 from the countries identified in this document). Applicants can implement exchanges for up to 40 percent of program participants. Applicants must identify sub-award recipients to carry out programming for at least 60 percent of the participants (approximately 253 participants). Proposals must describe in detail the program model that will be used by both the award recipient and the sub-award recipients and also must describe the oversight of the sub-award recipients to ensure consistent and high quality programming throughout the FY 2017 Youth Ambassadors program.

#### **II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

The award recipient's specific responsibilities for each program include:

1) Recruitment and Selection

- a) The award recipient will manage and oversee the merit-based competitions for all participants to ensure sub-award recipients provide consistently high quality throughout the programs.
- b) For foreign participants, the award recipient will conduct an open, merit-based competition for youth and adult exchange participants in the partner country (except in Brazil and in the Caribbean, where the U.S. embassies are the in-country partner). The recruitment and selection process should be thoroughly coordinated with the Public Affairs Sections (PAS), with clearly identified criteria for the selection and a formal process that includes an application and an interview (either by phone or in-person). Collaboration with Binational Centers (BNCs) is encouraged, if possible.
- c) In programs with reciprocal U.S. participant exchanges, the award recipient must conduct an open, national, merit-based competition for youth and adult exchange participants that are citizens of the United States, in cooperation with ECA. The award recipient and sub-award recipients must publicly advertise the call for applications and recruit diverse participants from the United States for programs in the Western Hemisphere.
- d) Develop a timeline of administrative and program activities, incorporating time for input and vetting, and share it with the Public Affairs Section well in advance of deadlines.
- e) Develop plans for outreach and recruitment of both students and educators that will generate a strong pool of qualified candidates that represent the diversity of their country.
- f) Develop application forms for students and adult educators in consultation with ECA and PAS.
- g) Administer an effective language screening process, as appropriate, in consideration of PAS goals and target audiences.
- h) Recommend the final participants and alternates. No invitations may be issued without Department of State clearance (ECA and PAS).

2) Preparation

- a) Contact participants before the program to provide them with program information, pre-departure materials, and to gather information about their specific interests.
- b) Facilitate the passport and J-1 visa application process for the foreign participants (except Brazil and the Caribbean), working with ECA and PAS, including providing funds for the passports, if necessary. Facilitate passports and secure visas for the U.S. participants. Issue DS-2019 forms for the participants.
- c) Ensure that each participant meets medical and health standards and has required immunizations to travel to the partner country.
- d) Enroll participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefits plan for the duration of the exchange, and assist with claims as necessary.
- e) Develop communications plan addressing program amplification and emergency procedures.
- f) Conduct a pre-departure orientation for participants, including general and program-specific information, as well as intercultural training, and gender-specific training on sexual harassment prevention and awareness. Solicit input from PAS and invite them to participate in the pre-departure orientation and welcome session.
- g) Hire and train staff, as needed, to accompany participants during the exchange period. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for all program staff.
- h) Make housing arrangements. Carefully recruit, screen, and select diverse local host families to offer

homestays (lodging and meals) to the participants for the majority of the exchange period. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years or older. Monitor housing arrangements to ensure the health and safety of participants. In South America and Central America, consult with the applicable U.S. embassy on host family locations (regions, neighborhoods) for U.S. participants.

- i) Orient local partners, staff, and families to the program's goals and the visitors' cultures and sensitivities.
- j) Make arrangements for interpreters, as needed, for French and Spanish language programs.
- k) Arrange participants' international and domestic travel, and in-country travel expenses, with the exception of international travel from Brazil to the United States. All international travel should comply with the Fly America Act.

### 3) Exchange Activities

- a) Design, plan, and implement intensive and substantive three-week exchange programs on the stated themes. Exchange activities must promote program goals. Activities will be school and community-based, as appropriate to the program. Recruit peers from the host country to be engaged in activities with the exchange participants.
- b) Provide opportunities for the adult participants to work with their peers and other professionals, volunteers, and youth advocates with whom they can discuss the support of youth development.
- c) Arrange appropriate community, cultural, social, and civic activities. Ensure that the range of program provides a balanced view of the social and political spectrum.
- d) Engage participants in at least two community service activities during the exchange. The program should provide context for the participants – identifying community needs, volunteerism, charitable giving, etc. – and a debriefing so that the service activity is not an isolated event and helps participants apply the experience at home.
- e) Provide day-to-day monitoring of the participants' well-being and prevent and deal in a timely manner with any misunderstandings or adjustment issues that may arise. Inform ECA and PAS about any significant health or safety issues affecting program participants within 24 hours or as soon as possible.
- f) Provide a welcome orientation to serve as an introduction to the program and its objectives as well as an introduction to the host country.
- g) Provide a closing session to summarize program activities, prepare participants for their return home, and plan for the future as alumni to help participants envision how this experience will provide foundation for their future work in their home communities. Ensure participants have a thorough understanding of how to utilize the Youth Ambassador alumni network and any web or social media network designed by the grantee to connect participants with current and previous participants.

### 4) Follow-on activities

- a) Conduct follow-on activities with program alumni that reinforce values and skills imparted during the exchange program and help participants apply what they have learned to serve their schools and communities.
- b) Present creative and effective ways to address program themes, for both program participants and their peers to amplify program impact.
- c) Support alumni in making presentations or preparing articles to share their experiences once they return home.

- d) Continually engage alumni in the network for the length of the cooperative agreement and encourage alumni engagement and reporting through a web-based or social media platform designed and elaborated in the proposal.
  - e) Arrange visits by program staff or educators to enhance the exchange by hosting follow-on workshops and alumni follow-on activities engaging previous participants in the participants' home countries.
- 5) Design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the program's impact and implementation in support of Embassy and regional objectives.
  - 6) Work in consultation with ECA and PAS in program implementation, provide timely reporting of progress to ECA and PAS, and comply with financial and program reporting requirements.
  - 7) Manage all financial aspects of the program, including stipend disbursements to the participants and management of sub-award recipients.
  - 8) Manage all sub-awards, both programmatically and financially; develop and implement a thorough plan for oversight.

The Department of State's responsibilities include:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to include ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- 3) Arrange meetings with Department of State officials in Washington, D.C. and the partner countries.
- 4) Approve the final candidate selection and alternates.
- 5) Approve applications, publicity materials, and final calendar of exchange activities.
- 6) Approve housing arrangements, including the selection of host families (in South America, Central America, and the U.S. only).
- 7) Monitor and evaluate the program, through regular communication with the award recipient and site visits.
- 8) Perform an annual performance evaluation/review of the primary award recipient to ensure program goals are being met. Make recommendations for changes or replacement of sub-award partners when program goals are not being sufficiently met.

Partner Organizations: For all programs except Brazil and the Caribbean, applicants or their sub-award recipients must have the organizational capacity in the relevant countries to fully implement the in-country activities, recruit and select participants for the program, per Embassy priorities and key audiences; and provide follow-on activities, and organize a content-rich exchange program for the U.S. participants, if specified. This capacity may take the form of a branch office of the U.S. applicant organization or sub-award recipient, a non-governmental partner organization, or other associate with demonstrated experience in educational exchange that can coordinate the program nationally. The award recipient will be responsible for full oversight of their sub-award recipients' activities under the cooperative agreement, both programmatically and financially. All applicants need to identify their representation in the partner countries and describe their local partners' responsibilities and qualifications. The cooperative agreement requires that the award recipient consider PAS priorities and regularly communicate with posts and be able to manage the program in its entirety, with little reliance on the embassy staff for implementation. All parties must acknowledge and use standard operating

procedures in emergency situations, as appropriate.

For Brazil and the Caribbean programs only, U.S. embassies, or a local organization working under embassy guidance, will serve as the in-country partner. The list of participating embassies in the Caribbean is as follows:

- U.S. Embassy Kingston, Jamaica
- U.S. Embassy Nassau, The Bahamas
- U.S. Embassy Bridgetown, Barbados (covers Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines)
- U.S. Embassy Georgetown, Guyana
- U.S. Embassy Paramaribo, Suriname
- U.S. Embassy Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

Participants: All youth and adult participants must be citizens of the country from which they are applying and be competitively selected. Preference should be given to individuals who have not previously traveled to the said country, especially on a U.S. government-sponsored exchange program. Once the cooperative agreement is awarded, the award recipient must consult with ECA and embassy staff in the relevant countries to review their recruitment plans in detail, any specific selection criteria, and the screening and selection process. Recruitment efforts should be designed to attract quality applicants that appropriately represent the diverse groups present in the country. To reach beyond the elite, particular emphasis should be placed on selecting participants from underserved or disadvantaged populations, including public high schools. We seek geographic, socio-economic, and ethnic/racial diversity among participants, including indigenous and African descendent populations. It is desirable to select some participants from the same town or region so that they can support each other upon their return home. The ratio of youth to adults should be approximately 10:1.

The youth participants will:

- be high school students between the ages of 15 and 18 years old at the start of the exchange, with at least one semester of high school remaining after the exchange program;
- be citizens of the country they are representing on the exchange;
- demonstrate leadership aptitude, an interest in community service, and in the program theme;
- exhibit flexibility, maturity, integrity, good social skills, and open-mindedness;
- have the motivation necessary to be active and successful exchange participants; and
- have sufficient proficiency in the language of the exchange (English, Spanish, or French) to participate fully in all exchange activities.

The adult participants will:

- be teachers or community leaders who work with youth;
- be citizens of the country they are representing on the exchange;
- demonstrate an interest in assisting youth to become productive and responsible members of society;
- exhibit maturity and open-mindedness;
- be supportive of the teenage participants;
- have sufficient proficiency in the language of the exchange (English, Spanish or French) to participate fully in all exchange activities; and
- plan to continue working in teaching positions or other positions of influence on young leaders.

The adults must be carefully selected and thoroughly briefed on their roles during the program. Although they are to be full exchange participants, they will also serve as chaperones responsible for oversight. They will have program sessions with the youth, as well as separate program activities designed specifically for them. It is important that they be prepared to allow the students to be vocal, candid, and active participants who do not feel they need to defer to the teacher. At the same time, their shared experience with the students will allow them to serve as adult advocates for the alumni once they return home.

For Brazil and the Caribbean programs only: U.S. embassies in the partner countries will be the primary lead on participant recruitment and selection, and will inform ECA and the award recipient of their selection. The award recipient will coordinate and support as needed the recruitment and selection process in these countries.

Orientations: The award recipient will conduct pre-departure and welcome orientations for the participants to introduce them to the host community and to prepare them for the activities ahead with input from PAS. For Brazil and the Caribbean, the U.S. embassies will conduct the orientation with program-specific information provided by the award recipient. The orientations should include a general political, historical, educational, and cultural introduction to the United States or to the partner country, information related specifically to the objectives and themes of the program, and practical and administrative information. The award recipient should consider including the youth participants' parents/guardians in the pre-departure orientation or providing them with separate materials. The award recipient should invite the U.S. embassy or ECA to participate in the pre-departure orientation.

Exchange Program: The program should consist primarily of interactive activities, practical experiences, and other opportunities that provide an introduction to the host country's civic, cultural, and educational institutions. Activities should use hands-on methods to help the participants learn about the fundamentals of civil society and community activism, build their leadership skills, and develop similar activities for their peers back home. ECA urges applicants to present innovative, resourceful, and effective programming ideas. Applicants should justify their choices by explaining how their program plan will meet the stated goals.

The activities could include a mix of workshops, simulations and role-playing, teambuilding exercises, case studies, volunteer service, leadership development, meetings, classroom visits, site visits, and social time among peers. Many of these should be planned in conjunction with participation in school and community activities in a way that is educational for the exchange participants and their hosts/peers. Exchange participants should not attend classes in a school for more than a few days. All programming should include host country participants wherever possible. Cultural and recreational activities will balance the schedule. The program will also provide opportunities for the adult educators to work with their peers and other professionals to learn about new topics and methods in education and support for youth activism.

In the United States, each program will include four to seven days in Washington, D.C., at any point in the exchange, for educational activities that focus on the U.S. political system and citizen involvement in public life. This time may also include a visit to the U.S. Department of State to provide exposure to U.S. foreign policy as it relates to the participants' countries of origin. This segment and the remaining weeks in communities outside Washington, D.C. will include a variety of activities and will offer the participants exposure to the diversity of American life. In the selected partner countries, similar organizations and activities will be utilized for an equally robust educational experience for the U.S. exchange participants. For Brazil,

please provide an outline of proposed activities; the award recipient will coordinate the specific plans with U.S. Embassy Brasilia.

Examples of the kinds of program activities that may be included are:

- Community service/volunteer activities
- Peer training/education workshops
- Teambuilding exercises
- Fundraising strategies
- Program/time management workshops
- Leadership development with workshop trainers or organizations
- Meetings with government, community, and business leaders
- Computer training that emphasizes research, critical thinking and analysis, and the use of the computer and internet as resources in education and business
- Exercises related to conflict resolution, increasing tolerance and developing strategies for future collaboration and cooperation among participants
- Dialogues, simulations, role plays and other activities aimed at helping participants articulate their thoughts about the program's themes and developing presentation skills
- Visits to historical sites, government and community centers, museums and landmarks that combine learning about principals of government, history, and society with tourism
- Sports, drama, fine arts, musical and other extracurricular activities which provide opportunities for participants to work and play together

The award recipient will conduct a welcome orientation for the participants upon arrival in the United States to introduce them to the program and the community. Exchanges will end with a closing session that focuses on summarizing the experience, developing action plans for activities at home, and preparing for re-entry. Although the ideas and action plans to be implemented at home should spring from the participants, program staff should be prepared to encourage, assist and direct the participants in developing these plans both during the exchange and the follow-on period.

Sites: In addition to visiting Washington, D.C. (or the capital city of the host country), the delegations should spend time in no more than one or two locations to allow participants to familiarize themselves with a community. Applicants should describe the rationale for their location selections. ECA encourages applicants to consider proximity to sites of historical or cultural interest, access to organizations that can conduct appropriate workshops, and representation of the diversity of the host country.

Accommodations: In the United States, homestays with local families must be arranged for most of the exchange period. For the U.S.-based activities that will be conducted in Spanish or French, the award recipient should place participants who speak no English with host families where at least one member speaks Spanish or French. In the partner countries, homestays are strongly encouraged for a significant portion of the exchange period. A significant period will offer the participants sufficient time to become familiar with life in a local home, but may be somewhat abbreviated given the possible language and cultural barriers. A dormitory, hotel, or other housing with appropriate adult supervision is an acceptable arrangement for other segments of the program, such as the welcome orientation, the capital city program, the closing session, or special workshops.

The award recipient must have a clear and detailed host family recruitment, screening, and selection process.

They must also provide the families with an orientation prior to their exchange participants' arrival which emphasizes the program's goals. Screening needs to include a visit to the home to meet all members of the household to ensure that the host family is capable of providing a comfortable and nurturing home environment. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years or older. The orientation will provide families with detailed information on the exchange program, the parameters of their participation, duties and obligations, and information on cultural differences and practices.

ECA encourages diversity in host family recruitment and selection. Host families may represent diversity in family size and structure, race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, and geography. Exchange participants should be afforded private space in the home. While exchange participants may share a room with someone of a similar age and the same gender, they must have their own bed. Participants may be placed with host families as singles or in pairs. Host families need to have adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations. In South America and Central America only, families may receive a reasonable living allowance to reimburse costs associated with hosting a student, but not to serve as a financial incentive. The amounts of any stipends or allowances should be justified based on the host country's local economy.

Follow-on Activities for Alumni: The award recipient will design activities for alumni (of all program years), and support and mentor the youth participants in their follow-on program implementation. This may include providing materials, serving as a resource or advisor, and working with the embassy and adult participant alumni to help nurture on-going contact with the participants. ECA seeks creative ideas to ensure that alumni effectively carry out their follow-on programs and remain engaged in activities, particularly ideas that amplify the program impact through peers. Alumni programming in the form of seminars, newsletters, and online platforms serves to maximize and extend the exchange program's benefits. Follow-on plans should take into account that internet access may be limited in some areas. All alumni contact information gathered by the award recipient on behalf of this program must be made available to the Department of State. Please refer to the PSI for additional guidance.

Evaluation: The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 requires that federal agencies measure the results of their programs in meeting performance goals. The proposal should demonstrate the applicant's plan to measure the medium-term impact of the program and incorporate lessons learned. The follow-on activities will provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the exchanges on the participants, to determine how their attitudes have changed, and to evaluate the acquisition of knowledge and skills associated with program themes.

Other notes: The award recipient is responsible for all program components outlined in this document. In addition, the Bureau requires the award recipient to communicate with ECA and PAS on a regular basis about program activities, including recruitment, selection and orientations, host family locations, publicity, and follow-on activities. The award recipient must also inform the ECA Program Officer of its progress at each stage of the program's implementation in a timely fashion, and it must also obtain approval of any significant program changes in advance of their implementation. All materials and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. ECA will retain copyright use of and can distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

Additional Sub-award Recipients: Once the cooperative agreement is awarded, the award recipient may, under



ECA direction, bring additional sub-award recipients into the program if needed to meet program requirements.

Participant Monitoring Responsibilities: The award recipient will develop a monitoring plan for program participants. Youth Ambassadors are with staff from the implementing partner on a daily basis and their health, safety and well-being will be constantly monitored. The award recipient should outline its plan for monitoring and handling any emergency health or conduct issues, physical or mental, that may occur while participants are under its care.

Social Media and Website: The award recipient will establish and maintain a web presence that will provide current information about the Youth Ambassadors program and its alumni. Additionally, the award recipient will coordinate social media engagement for the program in coordination with ECA and in accordance with ECA's social media guidelines to ensure media is appropriate for the level of sensitivity and maintains the online security of those involved.

Alumni Network: The award recipient will establish a network of alumni and conduct follow-on activities which will include previous participants to establish a cohesive group for networking that spans the entire Western Hemisphere region. The proposal should clearly state how this will be accomplished and what web platform or social media will be used to ensure alumni networking opportunities will be active and robust.

## **SUB-AWARDS**

Additional guidelines for the sub-award recipients include:

Sub-award recipients must conform to the same program model and guidelines as the primary award recipient. The primary awardee will be responsible for ensuring consistent, high quality and robust programming across the Youth Ambassadors program, and will provide thorough oversight of the exchanges conducted by the sub-award recipients.

Countries: The sub-awards may be provided to one or multiple recipients who exhibit strong regional and/or country capacity to conduct youth programming.

Numbers: Sub-awards granted under this cooperative agreement must be used to select and program at least 60 percent (or approximately 253) of the total number of both foreign and American participants.

## **PROPOSAL CONTENTS**

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

**NOTE:** Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word

- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

### **Online Forms**

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs”
- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

### **Program Narrative**

#### Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the program:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
  - a. Number and description of participants
  - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
  - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
  - d. Fields covered
  - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

#### Narrative

In a maximum of 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the program addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision: Describe the program objectives and the desired outcomes, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudinal changes that the participants will acquire.
2. Participating Organizations: Identify critical partner organizations for the program, their roles, and the applicant’s reasons for including them. Applicants must also describe their working relationship with the partner organization(s) and detail the division of program responsibilities between the award recipient and the partner organization(s).

3. Recruitment, Screening, and Selection: Describe how the applicant will coordinate with the appropriate U.S. embassy in a recruitment and selection plan. Present a plan for advertising the program. Outline both the process and the criteria by which finalists will be selected. Identify who is responsible for selection. This does not apply for applicants for the Brazil or the Caribbean programs who will be selected and recruited by the U.S. embassies.

4. Program Activities: Describe the components of the exchanges and how they related to program themes, including program planning, orientations, educational activities, cultural activities, meetings, site visits, community service, and the closing session. A detailed schedule, outlining the three-week exchanges should be included as an appendix. Also, describe support for follow-on activities.

5. Travel, Housing, and Other Logistics: Detail how the applicant will arrange international travel (in compliance with the Fly America Act); domestic travel; homestays (specifically describe recruitment, screening, and monitoring) and other housing arrangements; ground transportation; stipend disbursement; and relevant administrative matters.

6. Participant Monitoring: Detail how the applicant will assure the well-being, safety, and security of program participants during all stages of the program.

7. Program Evaluation: In the submitted proposal, applicants should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported. ECA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique.

8. Diversity: Explain how the program managers will pro-actively support diversity in participant selection and program content, demonstrating how diversity can contribute to a vibrant civil society. Diversity should be defined broadly to include geographic, urban/rural, ethnic, racial, socio-economic, sexual orientation and religious diversity.

9. Institutional Capacity and Program Management: Outline the applicant's capacity to conduct programs of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: provision of educational and thematic programs; age-appropriate programming for youth; and previous work in the region. Describe the program staffing (individuals and responsibilities), qualifications, structure, and resources. If applicable, include this information for primary partner organizations as well.

10. Work Plan/Schedule: Outline the phases of the program planning and implementation for the entire award period. Provide a draft schedule of daily activities of the exchanges in an appendix.

## **Additional Information to be Submitted**

### **Budget:**

- The level of funding available for the base year of the program is approximately \$3,300,000, which will support one cooperative agreement for exchanges between the United States and countries in the Western Hemisphere. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.
- The available funding may be used to support the program and administrative costs necessary to implement the program as described in this solicitation. Please submit a comprehensive line item budget, as stated in the Proposal Submission Instructions. An explanatory budget narrative must also be included including separate break outs of sub-award budgets.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Web content coordination
  - Staff travel
  - Application and educational materials
  - Participant travel (international, domestic, ground transportation, passport and visa fees)
  - Orientations
  - Cultural and social activities
  - Meeting costs
  - Lodging, when not in homestay
  - Living allowance for host families (in South America and Central America only)
  - Food (primarily group meals)
  - Interpreters, if necessary, at least one per group of five
  - Follow-on activities
  - Alumni Network coordination
  - Evaluation
  - Pocket money for participants' incidental expenses
  - Other justifiable expenses directly related to administration
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- Stipends for host families are not allowed except in the South and Central America exchanges, and these stipends are only to reimburse the family for any expenses related to hosting the American students. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Bureau urges applicants to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Proposals should show strong administrative cost-sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner, and other sources.
  - Maximum limits on cooperative agreement funding are as follows: Books and educational materials allowance-\$100 per participant; Conference room rental costs-\$250 per day per room; Consultant fees and honoraria-\$250/day; Cultural allowance-\$150 per participant; per diem-standard government rates;

Evaluation costs-3% of the cooperative agreement. Applicants are encouraged to cost-share any rates that exceeds these amounts.

- Please note that there are no fees for the J-1 visas that foreign participants will use to enter the United States. Applicants should budget for foreign program participants to travel to the applicable U.S. embassy for visa interviews and should budget to cover the cost of participants' passports, if necessary. Applicants should contact the embassy or a consulate of the host country to find out their visa requirements for U.S. citizens, and should budget for participants' visas, if needed. The award recipient will ensure that exchange participants will be enrolled in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) to provide them with health benefits during the exchange. This cost does not need to be included in the budget. More information on ASPE is available at [www.usdos.sevencorners.com](http://www.usdos.sevencorners.com).
- Calendar of activities/itinerary
- Letters of endorsement
- Resumes and CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)
- First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

**Please note:** All applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

As part of final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by OMB on its [USASpending.gov](http://USASpending.gov) website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

## **ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA**

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange program covered by this NOFO, and an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of 22 CFR 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR 62, organizations receiving awards (either a grant or cooperative agreement) under this NOFO will be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's program." The actions of recipient organizations shall be "imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any organization receiving an award under this competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The award recipient will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program. A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://J1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division  
U.S. Department of State  
SA-44, Suite 668  
301 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

#### **APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

**The NOFO indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, call Cynthia Day at (202) 632-9352, ECA/PE/C/PY/T; email: DayCJ@state.gov.**